

IN THE CLAIMS

Upon entry of the present amendment, the status of the claims will be as is shown below. This listing of claims will replace all previous versions and listings of claims in the application.

Claims 1-6 (Cancelled)

7. (New) A method of controlling contact load in an apparatus for mounting electronic components on a substrate, in which a head holding an electronic component is lowered at a first speed to a first position where the electronic component does not contact the substrate, and is lowered at a second speed slower than the first speed from the first position until a predetermined target contact load is detected, the method comprising:

moving the head down by a predetermined distance at the second speed,  
measuring contact load after moving the head down, and  
determining whether the measured contact load has reached the target contact load, the moving and measuring being repeated until the measured contact load reaches the predetermined target contact load.

8. (New) The method of controlling contact load in an apparatus for mounting electronic components according to claim 7, further comprising:

halting the head for a predetermined period of time after moving the head down and before measuring the contact load.

9. (New) The method of controlling contact load in an apparatus for mounting electronic components according to claim 7, wherein

the predetermined distance is adjustably set in accordance with the target contact load.

10. (New) The method of controlling contact load in an apparatus for mounting electronic components according to claim 7, wherein

the predetermined distance is set at a first predetermined distance when the measured contact load is zero, and is set at a second predetermined distance when the measured contact load exceeds zero, the second predetermined distance being smaller than the first predetermined distance.

11. (New) The method of controlling contact load in an apparatus for mounting electronic components according to claim 10, wherein

the second predetermined distance is adjustably set in accordance with a difference between the measured contact load and the target contact load.

12. (New) The method of controlling contact load in an apparatus for mounting electronic components according to claim 7, wherein

when the measured contact load is the same as the previously measured contact load after the measured contact load exceeds zero, the measuring of the contact load is repeated until a different contact load is measured.